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BOOK REVIEWS



DANGEROUS TRADES. Edited by Thomas Oliver, M.A., M.D., F.R.C.P. E. P. Dutton & Co.

All nurses who are interested in sociological study, and who want to know more of the causes underlying the various forms of disease and disability with which their work brings them into contact, will find an immense amount of valuable knowledge in this book.

For those who intend working on lines of municipal and sanitary reform it should be quite indispensable as preliminary study.

It is compiled from the writings and reports of many experts, and contains a vast fund of facts not easy of access nor elsewhere brought together.

Dr. Oliver says that the twentieth century will be occupied with plans for ameliorating the life of the people—in other words, the workers; that the lot of working people will be improved and industrial hygiene promoted. No social legislation, however, is possible until public opinion is sufficiently educated to support it.

He says that experience shows that there is scarcely a dangerous trade from which, by dint of great care and attention to regulations, the danger cannot be largely removed. Public health as a science is in its infancy, owing its origin to the rush of population into cities.

Modern factory legislation is an extension of the ordinary laws of health to those workers who are unable to frame rules for themselves. Protection of the wage-earner is necessary against cruelty or harsh treatment, fraud, accident, even against himself.

Statistics make it abundantly clear that much sickness and mortality are engendered by industrial occupations, and that a large proportion of this is preventable.

The headings of the chapters show the range of ideas presented.

Under "Infant Mortality and Factory Labor" Sir John Simon is quoted as saying: "It cannot be too distinctly recognized that a high local mortality of children must always necessarily denote a high local prevalence of those causes which determine the degeneracy of the race."

The subject of "Half-Timers" (children who work after school hours) and "Arrested Development" occupies a chapter.

Under "Home Work" Dr. Oliver says:

"Apart from the points of starvation wages and excessive hours, one of the main facts brought out by recent investigations into home-work is the grave danger to the health both of the worker and the community at large arising from the making of garments in disease-infected and otherwise insanitary houses." . . . Also . . . "Such workers are often in receipt of relief from charity. The public pays the wages."

"The Physiology and Pathology of Work and Fatigue," "Dust-Producing Occupations," "Dust as a Cause of Occupation Diseases," "Refuse Picking," "Lead and its Compounds," "Phosphorus and Match-Making," "Industries in which Mercury is Used," "Wool Industry and Anthrax," "Rags and their

Products in Relation to Health," and many others are the questions considered in this valuable reference book, which is, moreover, put together in no dry statistical spirit, but permeated with a strong spirit of enlightened sympathy.

In this connection it is interesting to read an "International Congress for the Prevention of Industrial Diseases," by Dr. M. de Christoforis, the Congress to be held in Milan in 1904.



"REGISTERED" TRAINED NURSES.—Foreign visitors have said that the American is not happy until he has some kind of a diploma in the most conspicuous place in his drawing-room. This extravagant slander has a basis of truth in the fact that frequently the American likes to present some evidence of where he has been and what he has done. The "show down" is a familiar idea to him. As long as he is content with the idea, and does not extend it into the realms of fake, perhaps no harm is done. Diploma mills, however, are likely to have injurious consequences, and of all diploma mills those lately brought to light in Chicago seem designed to accomplish most harm. When was there ever a more impudent proposition than to train nurses by correspondence? If any profession needs actual contact with things, it is certainly that of nursing. A book nurse or a letter nurse can hardly help being an imposition and a scandal.

Nursing has ceased to be a duty which any woman can be supposed capable of discharging. When pain and anguish rack the brow, the real ministering angel is the sweet-faced, low-voiced, tender-hearted angel, who has studied antiseptics, dietetics, and hygiene. The suggestion about licensing trained nurses, therefore, deserves consideration. If the State refuses to allow doctors to practise until they have satisfied official requirements and are enrolled as reputable practitioners, surely the same policy ought to be pursued towards the women who are supposed to supplement the doctor's work. Examine the nurses, license them, and the correspondence training-schools will die.

It is certain that an attempt will be made at Springfield early in the session to legislate upon the training and registering of nurses. It is necessary that there shall be an intelligent basis upon which to frame a statute which the Supreme Court will approve of as constitutional. There is no doubt of the necessity of legislation to protect the community from imposture in a public interest.

Nurses who devote their time to this profession, and who bring to it attainments which have been won at considerable cost, are entitled to legal protection; and the community which reposes confidence in their diplomas is also entitled to protection. Education of trained nurses has improved with the improvement of medical education. Only those nurses should be entitled to State certificates who have had three-years' training in a regularly organized nurses' school connected with a completely equipped hospital. A law of this nature is indispensable to separate the competent nurses from the multitude of incompetents now rushing forth from the spurious nurse-training schools which are not connected with hospitals and have no means of educating nurses.—*Editorial in the Surgical Clinic (Chicago), December, 1902.*